CDC's Climate and Health Program

CDC 24/7: *Saving Lives. Protecting People from Health Threats. Saving Money Through Prevention.*

Environmental Health

Your environment is everything around you—the air you breathe, the water you drink, the community you live in, the places where your food is grown or prepared, your workplace, and your home. When your environment is safe and healthy, you are more likely to stay healthy. But when your environment exposes you to dangerous events or toxic substances, your health can be negatively affected.

CDC is committed to saving lives and protecting people from environmental hazards by responding to natural and man-made disasters, supporting state and city public health programs, educating communities, and providing scientific knowledge. We help maintain and improve the health of Americans by promoting a healthy environment and preventing premature death and avoidable illness caused by environmental and related factors. We also identify how people might be exposed to hazardous substances in the environment and assess exposures to determine if they are hazardous to human health. CDC invests in prevention to improve health and save money by reducing health care costs. We remain committed to maximizing the impact of every dollar entrusted to the agency.

Changes in the world's climate are affecting our health and well-being and will have even greater impact in the future. The 2009 report "Global Climate Change Impacts in the U.S." states that increases are likely in:

- The risk of illness and death related to extreme heat and heat waves, although some reduction in the risk of death related to extreme cold is expected.
- Some extreme weather events that cause physical and mental health problems.
- Some diseases transmitted by food, water and insects.
- Pollen production as a result of rising temperature and carbon dioxide concentration. These factors also are likely to prolong the pollen season in plants with highly allergenic pollen. Increased exposure to pollen presents a health risk, especially for people who have asthma or other chronic respiratory illnesses.

Climate and Health Program

The Climate and Health Program works to prevent and adapt to the possible health effects of climate change. The program identifies the populations most vulnerable to these impacts, predicts future trends, creates systems to detect and respond to emerging health threats, and designs programs to manage health risks now and in the future. The climate change funding for CDC represents the only U.S. Government investment dedicated to preparing our nation to anticipate and adapt to the health effects linked to climate change.

The Climate and Health Program has four key objectives:

1. Serve as a resource for federal, state, local and tribal health agencies on climate change and health by:

    - Providing technical assistance and making technical information easily accessible.
    - Identifying and showcasing promising practices and global and local success stories.

2. Prepare public health practitioners to address the health effects of climate change by:

    - Supporting state and city projects to develop, deliver and evaluate innovative public health interventions that can eliminate or reduce the harmful health effects of climate change. These successful projects can provide models for other health agencies to adapt for their needs.
    - Developing and supporting training and educational activities for public health professionals.

3. Provide tools, guides and processes that help assess vulnerability to possible health effects of climate change by:

    - Identifying, developing and distributing tools that can integrate information from many sources to map vulnerability to and assess effects of climate change.
    - Developing and distributing guidance on ways to determine the extent of current and future climate change related health effects.

National Center for Environmental Health
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry

CDC ATSDR

4. Serve as a reliable leader in planning for the public health effects of climate change by:

    *   Collaborating with national and international organizations to address U.S. and global health aspects of climate change more effectively.

    *   Providing the public health voice wherever important decisions about climate action are made.

Public Health in Action: Climate and Health Impacts around the Country

The Climate and Health Program is preparing communities around the nation for the potential health effects of climate change events such as more frequent and severe heat waves, droughts, flooding and extreme weather. Since its beginning in 2009, the program has:

*   **Launched the Climate Ready States and Cities Initiative** to strengthen the capabilities of state and local health agencies to deal with the challenges associated with climate change. Through CDC funding and technical support, eight state and two city health departments are applying advanced methods to address the health effects of climate change (San Francisco, New York City, New York State, Minnesota, North Carolina, Oregon, Massachusetts, Michigan, Arizona and Maine).

*   **Created a health adaptation planning framework, Building Resilience against Climate Effects.** This incorporates both prevention and adaptation solutions to climate-related health effects into health systems operations. The framework provides guidance for using climate forecasts so that health agencies can make informed changes to improve health.

*   **Conducted research and development to understand links between environmental effects of climate change and health. The program then** translates findings to support state and local public health response. Seven research projects are analyzing historical trends to demonstrate the environment-health link and develop models that will help health agencies predict and prepare for future health effects.

*   **Developed training on how to use Health Impact Assessment** on initiatives related to climate change.

*   **Added heat data to the National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network.** Data on such topics as pollen counts will be added in the near future.

> **Please see the CDC Policy on Climate and Health at**
> **http://www.cdc.gov/climateandhealth/**